The **class featured in this entry** is an instrumental band music class entitled Intermediate Band I. The size of the class in this entry is 31 students in grades 10, 11, and 12, ages 16-18. This class meets every day Monday through Friday for 48 minutes during seventh period, of an eight period school day.

There are a few **particular challenges for this class that have impacted the relative musicianship** for this class. Although every student is in their second year of band there are a variety of talent, skill, and general knowledge levels represented. The students progressed at different rates based on a number of contributing factors. Some of these factors include the beginning band class they came from, how large there instrument section is, the various parts and level of difficulty of music presented to them in the past, individual home practice, amount of optional after school lessons, individual learning styles, English language comprehension, and learning disabilities.

To describe in greater detail these factors that impact relative musicianship I give a few examples. The first example is the first trombone player who has relatives and family members that have played instruments all their lives. That outside musical influence and family support has excelled his performance ability making it a **challenge to teach high and low level** at the same time in the same class. The second example is **varied instrumentation** that limits confidence and strength of sound, peer mentoring opportunities, and leadership. In smaller instrument sections like the flutes consisting of only 2 players, those students lack the strength, confidence, leadership, and peer teaching that other sections utilize such as the clarinet section which consists of 10 players. These varied instrumentation levels can also cause ensemble balance and blend problems that need to be addressed on a daily basis. The third example is the **varied music reading comprehension**. Some students rely on learning the music by listening can inhibit their music reading comprehension. The other extreme can pose problems, relying solely on reading the music and not listening critically. I constantly reinforce the concept of combining and balancing listening and reading skills to become a more complete musician**.** The fourth example is the socio-economic status of my students. Due to a **low income socio economic status**, **no students can afford private instruction** by professionals on their instrument outside of class, besides lessons that I offer pro bono after school.

**The management of my budget has facilitated the implementation of the featured unit of instruction in immense ways**. First I must describe the context of my program prior to my arrival. I was hired at my school 2 years ago to start the band program after the position was closed for a few years. Due to the low socio-economic status of my students, all students are provided an instrument from the school to rent free of charge. When I initially came to the school their were not enough instruments for each class and the majority of instruments were broken or in bad playing condition. The few concert percussion instruments I found had been locked in the basement for years, the marching snares and bass drums were broken, and there was very little auxiliary concert percussion. Our music library consisted of a few difficult John Philip Sousa marches, jazz arrangements, and orchestral compositions. There were not enough chairs, the ones I have were small, designed for middle school students. I did not have enough stands and many were broken and graffitied.

First, I made relationships with local vendors to start regularly coming to the school to deliver supplies and pick up instruments that were beyond my ability to repair. I designed a projected budget to the principal and explained program needs, annual costs, and immediate costs such as purchasing instruments to meet class rosters. This projected budget added up to more than $60,000 which exceeded the administration investment projection. I compromised a solution by creating a 3 year investment plan that would meet the needs of my students and slowly revive band the program. I inventoried all the instruments, equipment, and music for the band program. I collaborated with colleagues when researching instrument brands and models, band arrangements, and sent this information out to vendors to bid on pricing before purchasing. A program of about 50 students grew into 167 this year, all with their own playable instruments and a diverse music curriculum that matches the students level of ability and projected growth.

In **planning and implementing my instruction**, referring specifically to the first video segment, the **qualities of students’ individual performances that directly impacted my planning** include development of tone quality and intonation, rhythmic accuracy, blend and balance, structural elements, articulation, and musical interpretation. Referring specifically to the qualities of my students participation that impacted my planning, all students must have their instrument, handouts, music, and follow rehearsal procedures and expectations.

The **overall goals for this unit of instruction** are the continuing development of tone quality and intonation, increasing the complexity of rhythm and syncopation, introducing a variety of quality music literature, increasing the difficulty level of music literature from grade 1-2 to grades 2-3, increasing sight reading, music theory and history knowledge, and participation in a music assessment concert.

These **goals are appropriate for these students at this time** due to the many factors. All of the goals correlate with the prior musical experience and current knowledge and ability levels of individual students and the ensemble. The first goal, development of tone quality and intonation, is appropriate for these students in their 2nd year of performance. In their first year, instruction focused on music performance fundamentals such as making a sound, learning the different fingerings, expanding range, and introduction to music history and theory. Students performed using the Accent on Achievement book 1 with the music being mostly homophonic. At this time, students have a foundation for sound production, and must now begin developing their individual tone and intonation in increasingly complex polyphony. The second goal, increasing the complexity of rhythm and syncopation, is appropriate for these students at this time after successfully mastering basic rhythm fundamentals, various combinations of whole, half, dotted half, quarter, and eighth notes and rests. The students are now being introduced to music and rhythmic studies that involve sixteenth notes, dotted eighth note and eighth note syncopation. The third goal, increasing the difficulty level of quality music literature from grades 1-2, to 2-3, is appropriate for the students at this time due to the assessed ability level in rhythm and range on their instrument. This increases the amount of quality music literature available increasing instructional tools and musical options. The fourth goal is increasing sight reading, music theory and history knowledge. Increasing sight reading ability is appropriate for these students at this time to widen the amount of repertoire performed, compare and contrast compositions, and reinforce concepts mastered using a variety of music. Increasing music theory and history knowledge is appropriate in continuing to build on the foundation of fundamentals covered in the first year of band. The final goal, participation in a music assessment concert, is appropriate for my students at this time to receive critical feedback at their stage of development from music professionals and veteran educators outside the regular classroom. These would be first time experiences for the majority of my students.

**My students performed many tasks during the implementation of this unit of instruction.** The daily warm up includes many tasks that prepare my students to rehearse the high quality literature I select for concerts. Among these tasks include scale studies, chorales, rhythmic exercises, improvisation exercises, long tones, rounds, and intonation activities. During rehearsal, students perform individually, in instrument sections, in SATB sections, and as an ensemble. Between rehearsal pieces, students practice individually. The band sight reads music from different eras of western european, amercian, and world music on a regular basis. The band is digitally recorded daily allowing self-assessment through the use of instructional technology.

**This unit occurred sequentially** in the third of a four concert series of curriculum during the school year with repertoire focused on marches, ballads/chorales, and fanfares for a music performance assessment concert. The overall curriculum consists of four units of instruction. The first unit of the year focused on an introduction to jazz, rock, pop, and latin musical genres, styles, improvisation, and historical references. This relates to marching season and the performance opportunities and audience at sporting events. The second unit of the year was an introduction to overtures and programmatic music for the annual winter concert for family, school, and community members, along with other school music ensembles. The third and current unit of instruction is based on performance assessment, musical repertoire focusing on marches, ballads/chorales, and fanfares at an increased difficulty level in preparation for a performance assessment concert. The fourth and final unit covers the historical periods of the Baroque and Renaissance in combination with other musical genres covered earlier in the year.

**The second unit directly relates to the third and current unit in many ways**. First, the difficulty level of music was increased from grades 1-2 to grades 1.5-3. Second, the performance goal progressed from a performance for family, school, and community members to a performance assessment concert for music education professionals. Third, concepts introduced relating to the specific music of unit 2 directly relates to unit 3, and further develops these concepts. Specifically, the piece Northridge Overture studied in unit 2, begins with a short chorale introduction. The concepts covered in developing this short introduction section; intonation, breath control, harmony, musical phrasing, balance/blend, and tone quality, directly relates to the entire composition, the ballad/chorale piece Whispers in unit 3. The piece The Tempest in unit 2, directly relates to the piece Critical Mass studied in unit 3. Both pieces are programmatic, and cover similar musical concepts taught such as allegro/presto tempos, staccato/accent articulation, rapid dynamic contrasts, and multiple layers of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic counterpoint.

**The following fourth unit directly relates to the third and current unit in many ways.** First and foremost, the students will review, analyze, and reflect upon the assessment data collected at the assessment concert during the third unit, and directly apply this data, experience, and strategies suggested by the adjudicators to the fourth unit. Second, the fourth unit culminates at the annual spring concert, where students perform a combination of musical repertoire from all previous units, with a historical emphasis on the Renaissance and Baroque periods of western music. The students will perform high quality historical music literature such as Tielman Susato’s Battle Pavane, arranged by Bob Margolis. Musical concepts developed learning Brandy Station March and Critical Mass during unit 3 directly apply to the performance of the Battle Pavane, such as staccato/accent articulation, rapid dynamic contrasts, dotted quarter/eighth and sixteenth note rhythms, and extended instrument ranges and percussion instrumentation.

**The high quality musical repertoire I have chosen for this unit** which culminates at a performance at the state band assessment festival are the following: Brandy Station March by John Edmondson, Whispers by Sandy Feldstein and Larry Clark, and Critical Mass by Todd Stalter. In addition to the 3 performance pieces for the concert, students’ sight read over 20 different compositions from composers such as Percy Grainger, Claire Grundman, Frank Ticheli, Michael Story, Samuel Hazo, and many others during the course of this unit. **Qualities that led to the selection of music that are appropriate to my students at this time** are tone color, structural elements, forms, rhythm, range, phrasing and historical style. In selection of the specific music selected for the concert, I chose 3 pieces of contrasting style, a march, ballad, and fanfare. Each piece ranges in difficulty from grades 1.5 - 3 and presented unique challenges fostering the specific needs of my students.

**I use a variety of instructional resources** including digital recording and audio technology, computer and internet technology, high quality music literature, and music professionals and clinicians from outside the school. I use digital recording in my classroom on a daily basis. I use a Dell Inspiron Duo netbook for digital recording. It is small, has a built-in microphone, and can be used as either a net book or a tablet computer by flipping the screen making it very fast and easy to use in the classroom. I use the free software program Audacity. Once the program is open I touch the screen once to record, once to stop, and once to play back from the band rooms sound system. Immediate feedback is given on student performance making this an extremely effective instructional and assessment tool. I have a computer station set up in my room that allows students to compose their own music using the Finale software program. I have microphones set up so students may record themselves on that computer using Audacity. There are play along software programs such as Smart music, and many educational videos and music on the computer the students may utilize. The internet is available to stream video and audio recordings. I have significantly increased the instructional resources available to students through purchasing high quality music literature, solos/etudes, method books, and chamber music that meets my students’ needs at their level of ability. I use a flip video camera to record my classes periodically to assess my teaching as well as assess my students, I show these videos on a television in class for student self-assessment. I perform in many different bands outside of school for professional development and enjoyment. I ask these music professionals to work periodically with my students after school. For example, I have a percussion instructor that comes in once a week to work with my percussion ensemble. I have other music teachers at my school involved in the band program teaching lessons, working with ensembles, and assisting with classroom instruction during and after school. **Additional technological resources that would have made my planning more effective** are increased computer technology in my room, currently we only have one computer station, and the Inspiron Duo netbook I use is my personal property. Permanently installed high end microphones in the band room would increase the quality and ease of use when recording rehearsals. A projector or smartboard installed in my band room would increase the amount of instructional options available such as showing instructional content off the internet, playing music videos, running software, and displaying sheet music for performance or analysis.

**Specific instructional strategies in my plan to address students’ needs identified in the first video segment** are performance modeling on multiple instruments, verbal and non-verbal instruction, rhythm and scale exercise drills, call and response, individual, section, and full ensemble rehearsal. For example, I planned to use performance modeling on the trombone to fix errors in accidentals, pitch, and rhythm during the trombone soli section in the first video segment. I planned to use verbal instruction to emphasize counting and rhythmic errors throughout the piece; ie. 1234, 1&2&3&4&, 1e&a2e&a3e&a4e&a, etc.. I planned non-verbal instruction such as exaggerated facial expressions and body language to increase dramatic expression of dynamics, tempo, musical phrasing, and musical enthusiasm. Specifically, during the accented ensemble eighth note hits on beat 1 in the opening section, crescendos and decrescendos throughout the video, the ritardando in the alto sax and clarinets near the end of the B section, balance during the flute and oboe entrance at the start of the B section which was covered up by clarinets and percussion, and dynamics in the trumpet soli at the beginning of the C section. I planned call and response to demonstrate and correct rhythm and musical phrasing problems during tutti sections throughout the first segment. To correct pitch, harmonic, and rhythmic/tempo issues I rehearsed the band micro to macro, ie. individual, section, SATB section, full ensemble.

**My planning addressed various learning styles** by incorporating a variety of instructional strategies and instructional resources to maximize my effectiveness as an instructor. I planned to utilize computer and recording technology, a comprehensive warm-up, prepared verbal and non-verbal instructional strategies focused on specific problematic concepts, and anticipated specifically where students would encounter difficulties in the music. **I planned to contribute to a learning environment that offers students learning choices** by incorporating choice into the warm-up activities, choosing music during the year that has improvisational opportunities, and performance modeling many different ways of playing the same section of music, questioning the students, and having them perform in different ways to teach and interpret musical concepts. I accommodate a wide variety of expression and response through dramatic facial expressions and body language, forms of non-verbal instruction. **I ensure fairness, equity, and access for all students** in my class through making the band and practice rooms available before, during, and after school. I create working relationships with the class as a whole, as well as each individual student. I make time during class where I am able to work briefly one on one clearly showing my interest in their development academically and socially. I created an after school lesson program where any student may sign up for individual help. **I made interdisciplinary connections in math, science, social studies, and english** during the course of this unit. I connected math with music through teaching concepts involving time signatures and mathematical fractions. I connected science with music through the performance of the piece Critical Mass, a composition based on nuclear fusion, which I also related to social studies and current events when the nuclear disaster occurred in Japan. I connected english with music through assigning written reflections of concerts after students watched the video of their performances.

I used the following **assessment tools to measure student understanding and growth**: videotaping rehearsal, digitally recording rehearsal, hand written rehearsal notes, written performance rubrics, grade book binder and online grade book program, pass-off performance quizzes, individual lessons. By using these assessment tools I analyzed the specific student errors and lapses in comprehension and adapted my planning to suit those particular needs. I used the videotape to visually assess students’ participation and performance, and aurally to identify errors in rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo, balance, blend, and tone. I used digitally recording technology to assess the students daily, and then dated, compared, and contrasted those recordings to track student and ensemble understanding and growth chronologically. By administering short pass-off performance quizzes weekly I was able to identify each students’ strengths and weaknesses and make accommodations as well as differentiate my instruction. I recorded these in hardcopy and digital format, and combined this data with the other assessment data I collected to create a more accurate assessment of individuals and the band as a whole.

**Specifically in the videotape** my assessment tools allowed me to identify visually wrong slide positions in the trombone section during their soli section. Many students missed their entrances after resting for a few measures such as the oboe and flute at the beginning of the B section, or the trombones in the A section. These errors were fixed in the second video. The alto saxes at the end of the B section forgot to ritardando and thus rhythmic accuracy fell apart. The clarinets were not together in there 2 part rhythmic motif at the beginning of the B section. Due to the use of assessment tools and analysis of student work I was able to correct these errors and many others as seen in the second videotape. These tools not only made me increasingly aware of how the students were learning and performing, they also showed how the students reacted to things I was doing, or not doing, such as conducting queues.

To **manage evidence of student progress**, I compiled periodic digital recordings of each class organized in folders on my computer, videotaped my class periods for later reflection in digital format, conducted individual and small group assessments called pass-offs, performances of specific sections of music during the rehearsal process, using the same grading system of the state solo/ensemble performance assessment rubric. I tallied these pass-off points in a grade binder by hand and later entered them into the online gradebook program.

**In the second video segment there are many differences in students individual performances, participation, and skills that I identified from the first video segment.** In the second video, the tempo was faster and closer to the composers written tempo marking in the second video. The trombones did not miss there soli section and played the correct notes and pitches. The oboe and flute did not miss there soli sections during the B section. The student playing the timpani solo played through the entire solo performing the correct rhythms. The oboe played in tune and was not covered up by other instruments. Dynamics were more sensitively performed. Balance and blend improved bringing out harmonies and rhythmic motivs that were covered up in the first video. The multi-layered rhythmic motivs were more accurately performed both stylistically and in context rhythmically with each other. The ritardando at the end of the B section was played more accurately in the alto sax and clarinets. At the beginning of the C section, the trumpets play the correct rhythms in 3 part harmony with the written dynamic of piano. The students are able to successfully perform the entire piece from start to finish without stopping.

**I provided opportunities for students’ self assessment and peer critique** through videotaping, digitally recording, and playing back their performances of small sections or entire pieces of music. Open discussion and written reflections and analysis are activities used to facilitate the assessment. I have students perform individually and in sections allowing other students to peer critique using constructive criticism.

**Students’ self-assessments regarding the effectiveness of my planning** told me that I was definitely making progress in relation to the objectives and goals I have set for my classes. The pace at which those goals are achieved and surpassed is something I need to focus on. Adaptation and differentiating my instruction are constant forces I battle with in becoming a more effective instructor. Lessons that work with one class, don’t always work with another, and I must diligently discover new ways of teaching the same concepts.

**In reflection**, the learning environment affected student achievement by encouraging participation, clearly stating objectives and procedures, fostered equity and positive behavior, enthusiasm, and a motivation to learn. Organization of the band room and clear expectations of rehearsal procedures lead to increasingly noticeable growth and student achievement which improved positive attitudes and motivation. Espirit de Corps and teamwork are at the heart of the learning environment and affected students in a extremely positive way.

**I would modify my planning if I could teach this unit again in a few different ways**. I would incorporate after school sectionals and full band rehearsals to augment classroom instruction. I would plan postings in the band room of specific sections of music to be practiced individually by the students each week based on their current needs. I would plan practicing techniques for specific concepts being developed for each instrument.

I believe this was highly effective planning for many reasons. The instructional and assessment tools utilized were highly effective in student learning and assessment. Technology I planned to implement played a huge role in contributing to high quality instruction. Instructional strategies, especially performance modeling and non-verbal instruction, proved to be highly effective and improved overall Espirit de Corps and motivation. In general I believe my planning has been highly effective in promoting student learning while providing a rewarding musical experience.

**I would modify my assessment procedures if I could teach this unit again in a few different ways.** The weekly pass-off performance quizzes take too much time to implement and a better strategy needs to be developed when individually assessing students. Technology that was not available such as a smart board would prove valuable as an additional instructional tool to be utilized. Increasing self-assessment such as using weekly performance rubrics that students fill out to monitor their progress could be helpful. Overall the assessment procedures that were utilized such as digital recording technology proved to be effective in promoting growth and student achievement.